

- 2 -

In the Claims

Claims 1 – 8 cancelled.

Claim 9 (currently amended) An apparatus for continuously cutting unpapered freshly pasted expanded, punched or cast lead or lead alloy mesh strip into paperless battery plates comprising a cutting roll [pair of opposed rolls] having cutting blades mounted thereon [on at least one roll] and an opposed anvil roll for cutting the pasted lead or lead alloy mesh strip therebetween into equal lengths, means for journaling said rolls in operative abutment with each other in a supporting frame, conveying means for continuously passing the freshly pasted lead or lead alloy mesh strip between the opposed rolls, and heating means for heating the cutting blades and the cutting roll and the opposed anvil rolls to a temperature [above about 150°C] in the range of about 160 to 300°C.

Claim 10 (cancelled) An apparatus as claimed in claim 9 in which said heating means are operative for heating the cutting blades and the opposed rolls to a temperature in the temperature range of about 160 to 300°C.

Claim 11 (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim [10] 2 in which said heating means are operative for heating the cutting blades and the opposed rolls to a temperature in the temperature range of about 180 to 210°C.

Claim 12 (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim [10] 2 in which the heating means are mounted axially in each of the rolls along the length of the rolls for uniformly heating the cutting blades and the rolls.

Claim 13 (currently amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 12 in which the heating means are electrical heaters mounted axially in each of the rolls in electrical communication with a power supply.

Claim 14 (cancelled) An apparatus as claimed in claim 10 in which the opposed rolls have cutting dies on one roll for cutting the pasted lead or lead alloy mesh strip passing therebetween into equal lengths against the other roll for support.

Claim 15 (amended) An apparatus for [a] cutting pasted expanded continuous lead or lead alloy mesh strip into paperless battery plates for lead-acid batteries [according to the method of claim 7] comprising a [pair of opposed rolls] cutting roll having cutting blades mounted thereon [on at least one roll] and an opposed anvil roll for cutting the pasted lead

- 3 -

or lead alloy mesh strip therebetween into equal lengths, means for journaling said rolls in operative abutment with each other in a supporting frame, conveying means for continuously passing the freshly pasted lead or lead alloy mesh strip between the opposed rolls, and [heating means] electric cartridge heaters mounted axially on each roll for uniformly heating the cutting [dies] blades and opposed rolls to a temperature [above about 150°C] in the range of about 160 to 300°C.

Claim 16 (cancelled) An apparatus as claimed in claim 15 in which said heating means are operative for heating the cutting dies and the opposed rolls to a temperature in the temperature range of about 160 to 300°C.

Claim 17 (original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 15 in which said heating means are operative for heating the cutting dies and the opposed rolls to a temperature in the temperature range of about 180 to 210°C.

Claim 18 (cancelled) A paperless battery plate for use in lead-acid batteries produced by the method of claim 1.

Claim 19 (cancelled) A paperless battery plate for use in lead-acid batteries produced by the method of claim 8.

Claim 20 (cancelled) A lead-acid battery having a plurality of paperless battery plates produced by the method of claim 1.

Claim 21 (cancelled) A lead-acid battery having a plurality of paperless battery plates produced by the method of claim 8.

Claim 22 (cancelled) An apparatus as claimed in claim 15, in which said pair of opposed rolls comprise a die roll having the cutting blades thereon and an opposed anvil roll, and in which the electric cartridge heaters heat the die roll, cutting blades and the anvil roll to a temperature in the range of about 160 to 300°C.

Claim 23 (cancelled) An apparatus as claimed in claim 22, in which the electric cartridge heaters heat the die roll, cutting blades and the anvil roll to a temperature in the range of about 180 to 210°C.